

Appl. No. 09/972,282
Amdt. Dated February 13, 2004
Reply to Office Action of August 13, 2003

Attorney Docket No. 81925.0005
Customer No.: 26021

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-23 were pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, and 6-17 are being canceled, and claims 2, 5, and 18-23 are being amended, to advance the prosecution of the Application. No new matter is involved.

In paragraph 11 at the bottom of page 4 of the final Office Action of August 13, 2003, claims 2, 5, and 18-23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, Applicant is rewriting claims 2, 5, and 18-22 in independent form. In the case of claim 2, such claim is being amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 1 from which it depends. Claim 5 is being amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 1 and 4 from which it depends. Similarly, claims 18 and 19 are being amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 1 and 4 from which each depends. In the case of claims 20 and 21, each of these claims are being amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 1, 4, and 6 from which they depend. Claim 22 is being amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 9 from which it depends. Claim 23 depends from claim 22 and should also be allowable now that claim 22 has been rewritten in independent form.

In conclusion, claims 2, 5, and 18-23, which are the only claims now remaining in the application, should be in condition for allowance as discussed above. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6846 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Appl. No. 09/972,282
Amdt. Dated February 13, 2004
Reply to Office Action of August 13, 2003

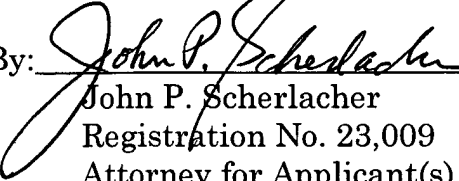
Attorney Docket No. 81925.0005
Customer No.: 26021

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: February 13, 2004

By:


John P. Scherlacher
Registration No. 23,009
Attorney for Applicant(s)

500 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1900
Los Angeles, California 90071
Phone: 213-337-6700
Fax: 213-337-6701